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For Immediate Release:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE AND FREDERICK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT RELEASE SUMMARY OF FREDERICK COUNTY CANCER INVESTIGATION

FREDERICK, MARYLAND (October 3, 2011) -- The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and Frederick County Health Department presented a summary of their investigation into cancer concerns in Frederick County at a community meeting in Frederick. The investigation, which has been underway for more than a year, was prompted by community concerns about cancer in the area of Fort Detrick.

The report used data on cancer from the Maryland Cancer Registry from 1992 – 2008 to investigate whether there is any clustering of cancer around Fort Detrick. The analysis consisted of:

- An evaluation of cancer incidence for cancers diagnosed from 2000 – 2007 in the three census tracts that comprise approximately a one-mile buffer around the perimeter of the Fort Detrick installation;
- An expanded evaluation in the same three census tracts for cancers diagnosed from 1992 – 2008;
- An evaluation of cancer incidence for cancers diagnosed from 1992 – 2008 in the 10 census tracts that comprise approximately a two-mile buffer around the perimeter of the Fort Detrick installation;
- A statistical analysis of how and whether cancers were clustered by geography, time, and type of cancer for all of Frederick County for the period 1992 – 2008; and,
- An analysis of the age of diagnosis for different cancers in the areas closest to Fort Detrick, compared with the age of diagnosis for the same cancers in Frederick County and Maryland.

Key findings of the report are:

- Compared with Frederick County, there were no statistically significant increases in all cancers or in specific types of cancer in the three census tracts that constitute an area of 1-mile radius around Fort Detrick for the period 1992 – 2008.
- Compared with Maryland as a whole, lymphoma was slightly increased for the same time period (1992-2008). There were no other increases in any other cancers or in all cancers compared with the State as a whole.
- When an additional seven census tracts were added to the original three, expanding the buffered area around Fort Detrick to approximately a 2-mile radius, there were no significant

increases in either all cancers or in specific types of cancer around Ft. Detrick for the period 1992—2008, compared with Frederick County or the State as a whole.

- According to an earlier analysis, the age-adjusted rate of all cancers in Frederick County had increased between 2001 and 2006, compared with Maryland and the United States. This increase is unlikely to be related to environmental exposures in the Fort Detrick area. If cancer occurrences were affected by environmental exposures from decades ago, the effect would be less likely to show up in a narrow range of time than to be spread out over many years. Analysis of the cancer rates for the three census tracts closest to Fort Detrick for the period 2000-2007 did not show significant increases in the cancers of greatest concern, compared with either Frederick County or the State.
- A different type of analysis of potential space-time “clustering” showed no significant clusters, when comparing specific cancer diagnosis groups with all cancer in the ten census tracts and Frederick County for the period 1992 – 2008.
- There was no significant difference in the ages at diagnosis for cancers in specific diagnostic groups in people living close to Fort Detrick (within the 10 census tracts immediately surrounding the installation) compared with people in Frederick as a whole.
- Examination of the reports by the citizens in the community showed that while there was some correspondence between those on the citizen list and those registered with the Maryland Cancer Registry, the disparity between the two data sources was sufficiently high that the cases reported by citizens could not be used directly as a case finding source.

Based on these findings, the report offers several next steps:

1. The Frederick County Health Department and the Maryland Cancer Registry will continue to review cancer incidence in Frederick County as a whole as new data become available. In light of questions related to the observed increase in cancer rates between Frederick County and Maryland between 2001 and 2006, it will be helpful to look in more detail at which cancers contributed to the observed increase and potential explanations.
2. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Frederick County Health Department will specifically look in more detail at lymphoma rates for the areas in question and for Frederick County as a whole, including different types of lymphoma, and ages of onset of different types of lymphoma.
3. If new information about environmental exposures, environmental risks, or other factors becomes available, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and Frederick County Health Department will review that new information in light of this and future evaluations of cancer in Frederick County.
4. Frederick County Health Department and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will report back to the community on the above efforts, and use those opportunities for public education and information around issues of cancer, cancer prevention, and cancer detection.

The full report can be downloaded at

http://ideha.dhmf.maryland.gov/pdf/Frederick_SummaryReport.pdf.

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